1: Fitzgerald H-5 (1937-1938) AES Sino-Tibetan
Border Peoples AES

usually acting as shrines to the Mountain God, whose name is sometimes chiselled on a smooth face. The enormous evergreen trees called by the Chinese *tung ching shu*, "Winter Green Tree", a kind of ilex (*ilex pedunculosa*), which are planted near temples and in villages, also come in for a share of incense burning, though no one can positively say whether the tree is itself sacred, or merely the home of another spirit such as the Road God.

Another sacred spot, associated with sacrifices for recovery from illness, is the tomb of the Mongol soldiers of Kublai Khan outside the West Gate, near one of the Nan Chao pagodas. The tomb, the common grave of all who fell at the capture of Ta Li by Kublai, is a large mound surmounted by a more modern stone tablet which records its history. At this place persons who are sick, or who are acting on behalf of a sick relative, burn incense, and sacrifice a fowl, which is then cooked and eaten on the spot. Part of the rite is to break a pottery bowl on the stone base of the tablet erected by the Ming Emperor Hung Wu, which records his conquest of Yunnan from the Mongol Yüan dynasty a century later. This tablet stands close to the Mongol tomb, and is now surrounded by a large mound of broken potsherds, testimony to the antiquity of this rite. No one can give any reason for the association of these two monuments with the healing of sickness, nor do any precise ideas of the agency invoked exist. No god is connected with the two places, and there seems to be no reason why the spirits of Mongol soldiers and their Ming successors should be supposed to have healing powers.

Not very far from the Mongol Tomb and Ming Tablet there is another monument of Kublai Khan, the great stone tablet on a stone tortoise which records at length his conquest and pacification of Yunnan. This monument is well known and its character is familiar to every educated per-

1: Fitzgerald H-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
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776 778 755 son. It is in no way a religious monument, even though it has three marble Buddhas carved on the reverse side of the pediment. But to the peasants the stone tortoise has become some kind of spirit with the diverse powers of a god of wealth and a healer of eye diseases. The rites performed here are curious. At the New Year those who desire to increase their wealth in the coming year break small copper cash on the back of the tortoise and scatter the pieces around it, as usual burning incense sticks before the deity. Those who suffer from eye trouble take copper coins and twist them in the eye sockets of the tortoise, or rather in the holes where once the eyes existed, for the long performance of the rite has hollowed out the hard granite to a considerable depth.

782 753 751 A large number of these more informal rites not connected with the worship of any recognised deity are intended to alleviate sickness. The Min Chia, though not unaware of the theory of infection and contagion, as their beliefs about leprosy show, still think that religious rites are an effective preventive against epidemics. When there is sickness in the town, usually typhus or typhoid, it is customary to erect a shrine in the street, where musicians play and chant sutras before an altar spread with sweetmeats and flanked with incense burners, as in the New Year festival at a private house. The shrine is moved further up the street after two days and the rites repeated until the entire length has been purified. The householders subscribe to defray the expenses. The same rites are performed if a ghost has been seen in a street, for this is regarded as ill-omened for the inhabitants. Cactus leaves are pinned up on the door lintels during times of sickness, and it is believed that the spirits of disease will not enter a house so protected.

782 753 The Min Chia and the Yunnanese Chinese also will never eat the eggs of hens kept by lepers, for it is believed that if

customary to adopt a nephew or a young cousin of a lower generation as heir. Widowers usually re-marry, and a widower is not considered to be an unsuitable bridegroom for a girl, but custom is opposed to the re-marriage of widows, who if they do so, can bring nothing but their own clothes to their new home, and must leave behind everything that they received from their dead husband. In spite of this, widows quite often do marry again, but only if they have no children of their own.

In spite of the real limitations and disabilities which women suffer under this system,[1] they are far from being downtrodden and secluded. When a woman has given birth to children her position in the home is secured, and as she grows older her authority increases. When she becomes the head of the household, after her mother-in-law's death, she is the absolute mistress of the home. Men have very little control over the running of the house. They are not consulted even when it is a question of letting a part of the house to strangers, and the rent is paid to the mother, not the father or the eldest son. They may invite guests to dinner parties, and they can conduct the outside business of the family, though rarely without consulting their wives or mothers. It is often assumed that the hardship of these arranged marriages rests only on the bride, but for the husband, who finds himself married, for life in practice, to a termagant or a spitfire, the home becomes anything but a restful retreat. Many men in these circumstances find escape by engaging in business in some distant city, virtually leaving their homes in the posession of the unloved wife.

In western Yunnan modern medical science is still almost entirely unknown, and the ravages of epidemic diseases proceed virtually unchecked. The doctors who practise old-fashioned Chinese medicine are indeed capable

[1] [i.e. the marriage system. --Analyst]

1: Fitzgerald H-S (1937-1939) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
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of curing lesser ailments with drugs and herbs which have real medicinal value, but many of their specifics are compounded of ingredients chosen for reasons more magical than medical, and if they have a curative effect, it must be attributed to the faith of the patient. Although the climate of Ta Li is healthy, being dry and free from malaria, the lack of a public health service permits infectious disease a free run until the epidemic has spent its force. Consequently few families are free from sickness in the course of the year, and deaths are always to be expected. Inevitably the people, being accustomed to this prospect, are less affected by the untimely death of a relative than peoples who have come to expect long life as the natural thing and regard early decease as a tragic accident. The Min Chia adult of riper years always has his coffin bought and ready, and death when it comes is met with the accustomed preparations without greatly disorganising the life of the household.

The funeral is arranged for the first lucky day, determined by consulting the calendar in general use, in which such days are marked. The whole family at once puts on mourning, the white costume, from headcloth to shoes, which is traditional with the Chinese, and adopted, like most of the funeral rites, by the Min Chia. This costume is worn until after the funeral, and the headcloth and shoes are retained for one month after the death. Until after the funeral the family avoid sitting on chairs or benches, using only low stools close to the ground, and eat only off a low table, as a sign of grief and humility. The musicians, who should in fact be Buddhist priests, but usually in Ta Li are really laymen, are called in to chant sutras before the coffin, which is placed in the main guest hall in front of the altar of the ancestors. Here it remains for at least one day, or until the earliest auspicious day for the funeral, which will

3: Torrance E-4 (no date) 1933 AE3 Sino-Tibetan Border Peoples AE3

old zeal and fire have insensibly diminished. Even in the present generation we ourselves have watched this decline make definite progress. Old priests from whom we learnt much of what is here given have died off, and their successors, while performing the motions of the ritual, have not shown half the knowledge of its inner meaning their sires did. Their surroundings have not lent them the inspiration they required to maintain the old time brilliancy of their religion.

With regard to the spiritism adopted in some quarters, the young priests are alleged to pass through a trance at their initiation. A spirit then is supposed to possess them, taking complete possession for the time being of their faculties. After this possession is over they are physically limp or half-exhausted until their strength is regained.

On the other hand, it is alleged that this is not always the case. The possession by the spirit is not real but simulated. An old priest instructs them how to feign the usual phenomena so that their reputation should not come behind others in having authority over occult powers.

Such as do have real experience with spirits profess to be able to call up these unseen personalities at will. By ways known to themselves they secure their aid or release from harmful influences. After a death, if the priest be up to his job, the spirit can lead back the departed soul under leash to his old home for a visit in a manner similar to the way shown in street processions of the actors of the Buddhist temple of hell.

In one district the priests carry, hung from their girdles, a bunch of ludicrously weird objects called the *Te-sa-a-ga*. Anything that is curious or strange enough or suggestive may find a place in the collection. Together they make a rare rattle for the ignorant and the gullible. You may see an eagle's bill, a cock's foot, a wild boar's tusk, a goat's horn, a bit of bone, a cymbal, deer's teeth, a Chinese charm cash, or a rare shell. Each object proclaims the exorcist powers of its possessor. With these by his side no one can doubt his ability to recall the soul in sickness, undo demoniac powers and save you in general from the evil eye.

Incidentally they prove a god-send to the sensationalist wiseacre. With these to shake in front of his audience, who dare doubt now that the Chiang are litholatrists, animists and demon worshippers! Seeing is believing? His case is proven. And he struts around as pleased with himself as the man who wears the lot at his belt.

He, however, who knows something of the genius of the beautiful old Chiang religion groans within himself at the sight of such things. How have the best become the worst? The *Te-sa-a-ga*, once pure as the morning light, has fallen from its high estate. We believe we hold the key to its primitive significance but must meanwhile wait before giving its solution. Sufficient here to say

5: Graham E-5 (1933, 1941) 1942 AE3 Sino-Tibetan Border Peoples AE3
Ch'iang

the eighth moon, or the first day of the tenth moon. He dances, beats his drum, and chants his "sacred books." 793 796

2. Since the souls of people that die violent deaths become demons, their bodies are cremated.

3. Demons are enticed by the priest into jars which are buried upside down on cross-roads or near the graves of the persons whose souls have become demons.

4. It is believed that if a man or a woman has pain in his bowels or chest this is caused by a demon. A ploughshare is heated white-hot, the priest chants and treads on the white-hot ploughshare with his foot, then treads on the stomach and chest of the patient, and waves the hot plough-share over the chest and stomach, and sometimes over the back, of the patient. This exorcises the demon. [755]

5. He divines to determine lucky days—for weddings, for beginning a journey, for starting to build a house, and many other things. Priests are supposed to have no books, but some priests have a book in which there is no writing, but there are many pictures. The twelve creatures of the zodiac occur several times in the book. This is a book for divination, and especially to determine lucky days. [787]

6. He conducts funerals.

7. At Mu Shang Chai the writer was told that the priest makes connections with the Earth Vein Dragon and with the Earth Mother and tells them to protect the deceased.

8. At Mu Shang Chai it was also stated that the priest ceremonially purifies the clothing of the deceased by incantations, smoke, etc., and that he informs the twelve gods of the decease.

9. He performs special ceremonies of worship on the housetops when requested to do so.

10. He performs special ceremonies on the housetops or in the sacred groves in performance of vows.

11. He ordains new priests.

12. He performs the ceremonies of setting up new gods in the homes.

The above list is probably not complete.

5. Sacred Implements.

The implements used by the priests in worship are sacred, and are to be handled with reverence. They are also naturally surcharg- 778

5:Graham E-5 (1933, 1941)1942 AE3 Sino-Tibetan
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Ch'iang

11. A long naturally notched antelope horn. If a person has 778
a pain in his eyes, hand, back or leg, the point of the horn is dug 755
into the ground, the priest chants, water is poured onto the disturbed ground, and the demon is exorcised.

Small brass mirrors are sometimes also worn on the priest's 778
ceremonial hat. Cowry shells have mysterious potency, and on the ceremonial hat add to the efficacy of the priest. Sometimes cowry shells are sewed onto the hats of babies to protect them from demons.

Some sacred implements found only in limited areas have been omitted

6. Sacred ceremonies.

As has already been stated, most ceremonies in the home are 796
performed by the head or by another member of the family. On special and important occasions the priest is called in. Friends and relatives may attend. Since women are considered to be [562]
impure, they are not allowed to attend any ceremonies in the sacred groves, or on the housetops. Inside the home they must stand at a distance during the ceremonies.

Practically always there is a bloody sacrifice as a part of the ceremony. A goat, a cockerel, a yak, a "p'ien niu" or cow from the grasslands that seems to be half yak and half cow, or rarely a pig is offered. It is never a cow that has been used in plowing. The sacrifice is a gift to the deity, and the primary purpose is to make a contact with the god in order to secure his favor and help. In central Asia there is a widespread practice of presenting to an important person a gift as a means of securing his friendship and assistance, and it is generally expected and welcomed by the giver of the favors. This idea is transferred to the gods, with the result that before a favor is asked there is a ceremony of worship in which incense, candles, and spirit money are burnt, and gifts are made of wine, or pork, and the sacrifical animal is killed as a means of presenting it to the gods.

Mu Bya Sei and the other gods are righteous, and require good conduct on the part of their followers. Forgiveness of sins naturally is included in the list of favors sought, but that is far from the only

held. I gathered from the Mewu-Fantzu that the magic power of a bŏm-bu is considered greater than that of the lama, although he does not enjoy special social privileges. In cases of illness, the nomads as a rule first consult a lama who can determine which spirit has caused the illness. They are sometimes in doubt whether in a certain case exorcism by a bŏm-bu or a lama would be more successful. The result is that, oddly enough, a lama is first consulted, and they let him decide, by throwing dice, which exorcism would be more effective, that of the lama or the bŏm-bu. This is a noteworthy indication of the tolerance Lamaism has for popular religion, and it also shows that the lamas for their part do not doubt the magic power of the bŏm-bu. Thus I was told that in cases of serious illness, the bŏm-bu is generally preferred because the people believe he has greater magic power, and that he is nevertheless no more expensive than a lama.

/51/ The most common task of the bŏm-bu is to heal sickness with magic. The cause of the illness is assumed to be an offense against the spirits or possession by an evil spirit, and above all, enchantment by an enemy. However, sickness is not regarded as a punishment for sins. In our discussion of earth spirits, we pointed out that the Mewu-Fantzu believe that sudden illness can arise if one scratches up the ground and thus offends the earth spirits. In this case barley roasted in a kettle is sacrificed. Half of it is roasted until it is black, the other half is less thoroughly done. Both halves are then mixed and strewn on the ground. At the same time cypress wood is burned, and sacred writings are read aloud. The reading aloud of sacred writings is an essential part of the ritual of exorcism, just as it is among Chinese exorcists. The bŏm-bu can read the sacred writings in the tent of the sick person, but he also reads them in his own tent, on the one hand, in order to learn them, and on the other, to bring good luck to other people who have delegated him to do the reading. For a three-day treatment of an illness the bŏm-bu is given a sheep or $3 - $4. For reading sacred writings in his own tent throughout a forenoon, he gets about 20 cents. A lama receives the same amount for treating sickness with prayer.

As an exorcist, the bŏm-bu's duty is to drive out evil spirits and if possible destroy them. He can catch the evil spirits. To do this he reads the sacred writings aloud and uses a whip made of yak leather. A man stands in front of the bŏm-bu and holds open a bag of yak leather into which the bŏm-bu charms the evil spirit. A great many people stand behind the bag, threatening the evil spirit

Mewu

791 with all kinds of weapons - muskets, bows and arrows, swords and
● 765 knives - and driving the spirit into the bag. When the spirit is
789 captured, the bag is carried outside, opened up over a fire of /52/ yak dung and symbolically emptied. The escaping evil spirit is threatened with the weapons carried by the men who accompany the bag, and this is supposed to drive the spirit into the fire where he is consumed. This burning of the spirit always takes place at a crossroad, which is why crossroads are avoided in the evening, since one never knows whether or not the burning has been successful. This type of exorcism is practiced only in cases of illness.

791 In special cases exorcistic rites are carried on simultaneously
789 by a considerable number of böm-bu. Thus before a war 10 to 20 böm-bu gather in order to curse the enemy and ask for good luck. In this case the böm-bu invoke a special god, the horse god (Ma-wang-yeh). They can also, like the lamas, invoke the mountain spirits which bring luck.

791 The böm-bu surpass the lamas in their exclusive ability to
754 practice black magic. However, they must be paid more for this than for ordinary exorcism. A böm-bu can be induced to bring sickness or a cattle epidemic down upon an enemy, but for this he must be paid with a yak or a horse, whether or not he is successful.

When black magic is practiced with the help of a böm-bu, a dog is killed and its blood used. The name of the person to be bewitched is written on a slip of paper, along with a magic formula. Then the paper is dipped in the blood of the dog and buried near the person who is being bewitched. (1) Meanwhile /53/ the böm-

1. In China we also find that cursed objects intended to bring ill luck through black magic are buried. For example, if a woman does not wish her neighbor well, she tries to gain possession of a few of her neighbor's hairs which she brings to an old woman versed in black magic and making a business of it. With the help of incantations, the old woman can make the hairs work an evil spell, for example, produce trachoma or boils. However, in order to be effective, the hairs must be secretly placed under the chamber pot (ma-t'ung) of the victim.

bu is reading aloud from the sacred books in his tent. It is not possible, however, by means of magic to turn men into animals

and vice versa, as I was told several times in China.

753 caused by the curse of other people can also be cured by asking the tuan-kung to perform service before the local god.

Besides, the Ch'iang believe that strange dreams can too cause diseases. A cow that drinks water or a woman who does not [844] avoid a shadow may also cause diseases. Born in an unlucky hour also can cause diseases (to the baby). If the source of the disease is unknown, the tuan-kung is requested to burn a sheep's thigh-bone with wormwood to discover it by divination. (The method of divination will be discussed elsewhere.)

The tuan-kung has different ways to cure diseases. The com- • 755 monest is the method of supplication and sacrifice, called mŭ-tchi-shōō-tchi-sa-wōō, i.e., substituting sheep for human life. Make a human figure with straws and put on it the patient's hat, clothes and stockings. Take a little tea, flour, and beans; and put them into a paper bag. Next, send the straw man and a sheep together to the graveyard, where the sheep is killed and the straw man burned. Then the tuan-kung prays, saying that the sheep has died for the patient and that the straw man, representing the devil of disease, is riding the sheep to go far away. The patient's relatives are not allowed to eat the meat of this sheep. On his way back, the tuan-kung will call the soul for the patient. Putting a piece of paper on the ground, planting little flags on its corners to represent the ancestors, and placing beside the paper a few moon and sun cakes and in the middle, pine branches, buckwheat, oats, or other grains and lard, the tuan-kung chants the liturgy of calling the soul -- shōō-wo-dio-shuei -- and sees if there is any insect climbing onto the paper. If so, he considers that the soul has returned. (If there is no insect, he uses the lard to paste one on it.) Then, he wraps up the paper and puts it in a basket in which there are a hat, eggs, and other things. A relative of the patient carries the basket and follows the tuan-kung home. On his way back, the tuan-kung points at the hills and streams and calls the soul to return. Arriving at the door, the tuan-kung requests the Door God to open the door and asks, "Has the soul returned?" People inside answer, "Yes." Thus, three times he asks and three times they answer. Then the tuan-kung sends the wrapped paper to the spirit tablet of the ancestors, /20/ as he beats the drum to declare the conclusion of the service. (If the patient is a female and a woman's long hair is found on the paper when the tuan-kung summons the soul, they regard it as the greatest success. And the patient is going to live several years more than his normal span of life.

•755 Those families that are too poor to hire a tuan-kung may let the patient's own sons and daughters do the job of calling the soul. The method is simpler. Put an egg in a hat; take a bowl of rice; burn three sticks of incense and take also three unburnt sticks of incense. Planting the burnt sticks below the eaves from which water drops, the patient's sons and daughters would kneel down, call their parents, and pray, "Mountains are high, roads distant, and the source of water is far away. Soul, please come back, ..." They shout all the way through the door and go straight to the ancestral tablet. They then burn the incense and plant it in the stove. They ask the question "Has the soul returned?" the same way as the tuan-kung does. If the first attempt at calling the soul is not successful, they must call three times in a row at the second calling. If again there is no answer, they must call five times, or seven or nine times in a row. Before the calling becomes effective, the rice and egg cannot be touched and used. The egg represents the soul and must be respected. It must be hidden in the stove before the God of Fire and covered with ashes. After the calling is finished, the egg and rice will be given to the patient to eat.

If the disease is caused by the Poison Devil, the treatment is different. The Ch'iang call it mu-zee-ho-bu, meaning performing service by the tuan-kung at night, or inviting a night tuan-kung. For this, the tuan-kung must display his magic skill. During the evening, the tuan-kung sneaks into the house of the patient, sets up an altar, worships first the God of Curing Diseases (Si-mi), chants the liturgies, makes a straw man and a flag, and does all other preparations. At the same time, he builds a fire outdoors and cooks some food to attract animals. He asks a hunter to hide behind the house to see if there is any animal coming toward the fire. Ringing his magic bell, the tuan-kung carries the straw man and the flag outdoors and calls in all directions to warn the Poison Devil and the animals representing the Poison Devil. Finishing calling, he goes inside the house to perform service. He puts a rice pot, a spade, an iron chain, and a black and a white stone into the stove and burns them till they are red hot. He also prepares a bowl of clean water. He chants the liturgies and jumps over the pot. (He actually walks over the pot. But, because he walks so fast, it is called "jump.") The patient is also assisted to walk over the red pot twice. Then the tuan-kung winds the chain around the patient. He licks the spade with his tongue and holds in his mouth the two red-hot black and white stones. He throws each of the stones into the bowl of clean water and gives the water to the patient to drink. At this moment, if the hunter has seen an animal and has killed it, the tuan-kung will at once, while chanting the

•755 liturgies, take the straw man and a sheep to the cross roads. He kills the sheep, spreads its blood on the straw man and the flag, and then burns them. This means that the straw man, representing the devil of illness, is sent away and that the sheep has died in the place of the patient. Everything in the belly of the sheep is thrown away. The tuan-kung takes the sheep's head, its hind legs, and its skin.

People do not invite a tuan-kung for a Poison Devil disease which is not very serious. They treat it only with the night-watching method called muzee-kue dze. The treatment begins by washing the patient's wound with water. Then, mix flour with that water to make a human figure. Cut a corner off the patient's clothes, take a head scarf and some hairs, and put them all on a plate. Build a fire outdoors and put the plate beside the fire. Also ask a hunter to wait behind the house to shoot the animal that happens to approach the fire. Even a valuable domesticated animal is not to be spared. An animal that has been shot must be traced and brought back, and must not be left to die in front of some other person's house. If no animal comes after long waiting, shooting the flour man or a whirlwind can also be effective.

783 777 Expelling Bad Luck--When the Ch'iang of Li-fan have bad luck and do not know what to do, they invite a tuan-kung to perform magic for them so as to expel the bad luck. This method is called "pil-wara" in the Ch'iang language. It begins with the host preparing two pints of buckwheat flour. The tuan-kung first mixes the flour with water to make various images of gods, which are kept at home; he then makes five mountains with flour and three double-leaf flags with paper. He takes the host's hat, a belt and a sun cake, and puts them into a basket. /21/ Besides, he also takes the host's accounting book, farming tools, and other important things, and with his helpers, moves them several miles away from the house. Finding a proper place where he can see mountains and streams, the tuan-kung sits cross-legged on the ground. He takes the flour mountains out of the basket and arranges them in a row on a paper. Then he builds a fire, burning pine branches. He now starts his magic performance, chanting liturgies, beating the drum, ringing the bell, inviting his old Master, calling the names of the gods of the five mountains, and reading aloud the host's age, name, and misfortunes. If the magic is effective, the weather will change at this moment, -- the wind may blow or a rain may fall. The tuan-kung watches the paper on which the five flour mountains are placed to see what (besides living things) has fallen on it. No matter whether it be an

2: Rock K-5 (1934-) 1947 AF16 Southwest China AF16
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S ch'uan, who had been settled there for more than 60 years. They, like the
114 Mo-so who dwell in this gorge, do not live, as he says, in "caves à demi en-
487 foncées dans le sol," but in houses built of stone. His map on plate 6 gives the trail as below the villages, while actually it passes above them and not along the river but at times 4,000 feet above it. The great Ta-shen-kou gorge, which the trail ascends and its eastern wall which it climbs in many zigzags, is not marked. According to him the trail leads only a short distance above the river. This is an impossibility. No one could walk along the Hu-t'iao-chiang or cross the Ta-shen-kou gorge without ascending it.

From Ta-ku, as well as from across the river, one can look up the tremendous gorge, and from the village of No-yü near the entrance one can look down it and obtain an idea of its grandeur, though not to the extent as if one actually travels through it. The quickest way to reach Bbĕr-ddĕr is by crossing the Yangtze at Ta-ku. Bacot gives us pictures of the inflated goatskin rafts by which he crossed, but not a single picture of the great gorge itself or of the renowned Hu-t'iao-chiang, nor of the villages in the gorge, as previously remarked.

As the northern part of the Chung-tien district is inhabited mainly by Tibetans no detailed description is here given, but the southern territory inhabited purely by Na-khi is dealt with in the following pages.

I. THE NA-KHI DISTRICTS OF HA-BA AND BBĔR-DDĔR (THE CHINESE HA-PA 哈巴 AND PEI-TI 北地)

S The districts of Ha-ba and Bbĕr-ddĕr are situated in the south-eastern part
131 of the Chung-tien triangle and rest on the Yangtze loop in the east; on the Ha-ba ndshĕr nv-lv peak of the Yü-lung Shan in the south; the Ta-ra mountain in the west and Pei-ti Shan (A-nä Ngyu Range) to the north. The massive limestone range of Gkü-dü also lies within the triangle.

S ST [184] The most primitive type of Na-khi, undisturbed since they first settled many centuries ago, dwell in this region. Here they follow their old religious
771 customs, which is a mixture of Shamanism and the pre-Buddhistic Bön religion
S of Tibet. There are neither lamas nor lama temples as in the Li-chiang dis-
ST trict, nor are there any Chinese temples, for no Chinese live here.

[764] An interesting feature is the total absence of graves in Bbĕr-ddĕr, for here
[755] the Na-khi still follow their ancient custom of cremating their dead. They take no medicines of any kind, but rely solely on their sorcerers to exorcize the demons of disease. They also practise in all its purity the ancient ceremony of *Muaṉ-bpö* (Propitiation of Heaven). The district contains one of the
S finest *muaṉ-bpö d'a*, or sites for the *Muaṉ-bpö* ceremony, situated in a beauti-
ST ful grove of old oaks.

177 Their territory is most difficult of access and this has kept them isolated and
[579] unspoiled. They have not come in contact with the Chinese, but, unfortunately, they are exposed in the north to Tibetan bandit invasion, and several times their villages have been reduced to ashes and their cattle driven off.
S Being unarmed, they themselves fled into the hills to save their lives.

631 They are under the Chinese magistrate of Chung-tien, a town in a purely Tibetan district, but that official, when there happens to be one, usually flies